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Standards & Benchmarks

**Language Arts**  
**Grade 8**

<b>Standard I Writing Process</b> Use the skills and strategies of the writing process			
	1 <sup>st</sup> Semester	2 <sup>nd</sup> Semester	Units
1. Apply the following traits to the writing process	X	X	All 6 traits are applied to essays literary analysis and other pieces; assessed & remediated to meet individual students needs
a) Ideas	X	X	
b) Organization	X	X	
c) Voice	X	X	
d) Sentence fluency	X	X	
e) Word choice	X	X	
f) Convention usage	X	X	
2. Create expository and persuasive compositions with appropriate structure that have a coherent thesis and make clear and well-supported conclusions		X	Debate
3. Write processed compositions and narratives of varied genres and establish coherence within and among paragraphs through effective transitions, parallel structures, and similar writing techniques	X	X	At least 4 compositions; 1 a quarter
4. Write narratives and a variety of other compositions that relate a clear, coherent incident, event, or situation by using well-chosen details; reveal the significance of, or the writer's attitude about, the subject; and employ narrative and descriptive strategies (e.g., relevant dialogue, specific action, physical description, background description, comparison or contrast of characters)	X		Heritage unit
5. Regularly use a thesaurus and other tools to choose effective wording	X		Basic instruction
6. Write expressive personal responses to experiences and prompts including literature	X	X	Heritage unit and literary analysis
7. Use a variety of prewriting strategies (e.g., makes outlines, uses published pieces as writing models, constructs critical standards, brainstorm, builds background knowledge)	X	X	All written compositions
8. Use a variety of strategies to draft and revise written work (e.g., analyzes and clarifies meaning, makes structural and syntactical changes, uses an organizational scheme, uses sensory words and figurative language, rethinks and rewrites for different audiences and purposes, checks for a consistent point of view and for transitions between paragraphs, uses direct feedback to revise compositions)	X		The Giver and heritage unit

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	1 <sup>st</sup> Semester	2 <sup>nd</sup> Semester	Units
<b>9.</b> Use a variety of strategies to edit and publish written work (e.g., eliminates slang; edits for grammar, punctuation, capitalization, and spelling at a developmentally appropriate level; proofreads using reference materials, word processor, and other resources; edits for clarity, word choice, and language usage; uses a word processor or other technology to publish written work)			Errors analysis strategies
<b>10.</b> Evaluate own and others' writing (e.g., applies criteria generated by self and others, uses self-assessment to set and achieve goals as a writer, participates in peer response groups)	X		Heritage; self editing and peer sharing

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<b>Standard II Style/Rhetorical Techniques</b> Use stylistic and rhetorical techniques in a variety of written genre			
	<b>1<sup>st</sup> Semester</b>	<b>2<sup>nd</sup> Semester</b>	<b>Units</b>
1. Use significant literary devices that define the writer's style (e.g. metaphor, symbolism, dialect, irony, imagery and figurative language)	X	X	Heritage unit, The Giver and To Kill a Mocking Bird novels
2. Use formal and informal language appropriate to a clearly identified purpose, audience and circumstance to demonstrate personal style and voice	X		Heritage
3. Support ideas with analogies, paraphrases, quotations and/or opinions from authorities, comparisons, and similar devices		X	Debate
4. Establish coherence within and among paragraphs through effective transitions, parallel structures and similar writing techniques		X	ERB Prep
<b>Standard III Grammar and Mechanics</b> Use grammatical and mechanical conventions in a variety of written genre			
	<b>1<sup>st</sup> Semester</b>	<b>2<sup>nd</sup> Semester</b>	<b>Units</b>
1. Identify and use correctly: a variety of sentence structures including varying the use of simple, complex, compound and compound-complex sentences in written compositions, a variety of sentence openings to reinforce the presentation of a lively and effective personal style, parallel structure in all written discourse including similar grammatical forms to present items in a series, complements and items juxtaposed for emphasis, use subordination, coordination, apposition, and other devices to indicate the relationship between ideas clearly (e.g., consistency with tense, part of speech, possessives, or plurals)	X		Science writing and literary analysis
2. Identify and have proper usage of the eight parts of speech and edit written work to reflect appropriate and effective grammar (e.g., verb tense, pronoun antecedent, run-on sentences, fragments, etc.)	X		Taught within writing process, ongoing assessment
3. Use correct spelling conventions	X		
4. Use correct punctuation and capitalization			
5. Produce correctly formatted work that follows the conventional style for the type of document (e.g., personal, business or memorandum)			

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<b>Standard IV Research</b> Use the skills and strategies of the research process - Gather - Analyze and interpret - Respond			
	1 <sup>st</sup> Semester	2 <sup>nd</sup> Semester	Units
1. Plan and conduct a multiple-step research process using print and multimedia resources	X	X	Science writing and Learning Fair Debate
a) Include a well defined thesis (one that makes a clear and knowledgeable judgment)		X	Learning Fair and associated debate research
b) Use a variety of primary and secondary sources, determining the nature and usefulness of each		X	
c) Evaluate accuracy and validity of information (e.g., identifying the web address, date of publication, author, target audience, purpose)		X	
d) Use the structure and organization of encyclopedias, newspapers, periodicals, search engines and directories, and web reference sites		X	
e) Exhibit careful reading and insight in interpretations		X	
f) Draw supported inferences and judgments through references to the source		X	
g) Use research information, sources, etc. to substantiate original thought (personal thesis, claims, conclusions, etc.)		X	
2. Record important ideas, concepts, and direct quotations from significant information sources		X	
a) Paraphrase and summarize all perspectives on the topic as appropriate		X	Science writing; passive voice
b) Use appropriate methods to cite and document reference sources including a bibliography in MLA format. Avoid plagiarism and use citing sources both for quotes and ideas		X	
3. c) Organize and convey information in an appropriate way	X		
d) Present detailed evidence, examples, and reasoning to support arguments, differentiating between facts and opinion		X	
e) Provide details, reasons, and examples arranging them effectively by anticipating and answering audience concerns and counterarguments		X	Debate
f) Present information purposefully and succinctly and meet the needs of the intended audience	X	X	Science writing and debate

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<b>Standard V</b> <b>Reading Process</b> Use the skills and strategies of the reading process across a variety of genre - Word analysis - Fluency - Vocabulary development			
	1 <sup>st</sup> Semester	2 <sup>nd</sup> Semester	Units
<b>1.</b> Interpret meaning from a variety of texts	X	X	The Giver & To Kill a Mocking Bird novel units
a) Use idioms, analogies, metaphors, and similes to infer the literal and figurative meanings of phrases	X	X	Ongoing and year long study of etymology and derivation
b) Use knowledge of word relationships, as well as word roots and context clues, to determine the meaning of specialized vocabulary and to determine the precise meaning of grade-level-appropriate words	X	X	On going vocabulary studies
c) Use word meanings within the appropriate context and be able to verify those meanings by definition, restatement, example, comparison, or contrast	X	X	
<b>2.</b> Describe conventions and devices used by the author to accomplish his or her purpose			
a) Identify idioms, analogies, metaphors and similes in prose and poetry	X	X	Heritage and To Kill a Mocking Bird
<b>3.</b> Reflect on reading and form personal responses which demonstrate understanding of the text and relevance to self and the world	X	X	Literary analysis, response
<b>4.</b> Establish and adjust purposes for reading	X	X	Book log and assessment

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<b>Standard VI Interpret Literature</b> Use reading skills and strategies to comprehend and interpret a variety of genre			
	1 <sup>st</sup> Semester	2 <sup>nd</sup> Semester	Units
<b>1.</b> Develop strategies to interpret a variety of texts, for example			
a) Make inferences and draw conclusions based on implicit and explicit information	X		The Giver – comprehension questions
b) Make connections between essential ideas, arguments, and perspectives of an informational text		X	Debate
c) Use reading strategies, such as predictions, text-to-self, text-to-text, text-to-world connections to interpret written pieces	X		Heritage – House on Mango St anthology
d) Evaluate the proposition-and-support patterns in persuasive text		X	Debate
e) Analyze how a work of literature reflects the heritage, traditions, attitudes, and beliefs of its author (biographical approach)	X		Heritage – House on Mango St anthology
<b>2.</b> Identify significant literary devices that define a writer's style (e.g., metaphor, symbolism, alliteration) and use those elements to interpret the work	X		Heritage – House on Mango St anthology
<b>3.</b> Explain connections among essential ideas, arguments, and perspectives of literary text	X		The Giver – false utopia
<b>4.</b> Write personal responses to literature that develop interpretations, exhibit careful reading and insight (e.g., connect the student's own responses to specific textual references; draw supported inferences about the effects of a literary work on its audience), and support judgments through references to the text, other works, other authors, or to personal knowledge	X	X	Literary analysis of class or homework reading
<b>5.</b> Recognize and interpret the structure of a variety of texts			
a) Name the structural elements of the plot (e.g., exposition, rising action, climax), the plot's development, and explain the extent to which conflicts are addressed and resolved	X	X	The Giver and as part of literary response
b) Evaluate the unity, coherence, logic, internal consistency, and structural patterns of the text	X		The Giver flashback etc
c) Determine and articulate the relationship among the purposes and characteristics of different forms of poetry (e.g., ballad, lyric, couplet, epic, elegy, ode and/or sonnet.)	X	X	Heritage; variety of poetic forms. Shakespeare iambic pentameter

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	1 <sup>st</sup> Semester	2 <sup>nd</sup> Semester	Units
<b>6.</b> Interpret elements of the text, for example			
a) Explain the relevance of setting (place, time, and customs) to the mood, tone, and meaning of text	X		The Giver
b) Identify and analyze recurring comparative themes (e.g., good and evil, heroism, appearance v. reality) across works	X	X	The Giver & To Kill a Mocking Bird novels as well as independent choices
c) Compare and contrast motivations and reactions of literary characters from different historical eras confronting similar situations or conflicts	X	X	As above as well as House on Mango St.

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<b>Standard VII      Listening and Speaking Skills</b> Use listening and speaking skills and strategies for a variety of purposes			
	<b>1<sup>st</sup> Semester</b>	<b>2<sup>nd</sup> Semester</b>	<b>Units</b>
<b>1.</b> Paraphrase a speaker's purpose and point of view, and ask relevant questions concerning the speaker's content, delivery and purpose		X	Mock debates
<b>2.</b> Evaluate the quality of a speaker (e.g., organization of information for audience and purpose, correct language and grammar, voice modulation, tone, and pacing)		X	As above
<b>3.</b> Evaluate the credibility of a speaker (e.g. hidden agendas, slanted or biased material)		X	As above
<b>4.</b> Discuss one another's ideas in groups and through journal dialogues, focusing on a respect for viable perspectives/arguments	X		Book club discussion
<b>5.</b> Display appropriate grammar, word choice, pronunciation, and pace during formal presentations	X		Heritage presentation
<b>6.</b> Use precise language, action verbs, sensory details, appropriate and colorful modifiers, and active rather than passive voice to enliven oral presentations	X		As above
<b>7.</b> Plan and shape presentations to achieve particular purposes or effects and use feedback from rehearsals and the audience to make modifications		X	Mid Summer Nights Dream paraphrase
<b>8.</b> Deliver clear, coherent formal and informal presentations			
a) Use voice modulation, tone, and gestures expressively to enhance meaning and that are appropriate to audience and purpose		X	Oral book reports
b) Relate an incident, event, or situation by using well-chosen details; reveal the significance of the subject's attitude about the incident, event, or situation; and employ narrative and descriptive strategies (e.g., relevant dialogue, specific action, physical description, background description, comparison or contrast of characters)	X		Heritage presentation
c) Deliver persuasive presentations that include a thesis and support arguments with evidence		X	Mock debate
d) Deliver oral reports on research using exposition, narration, description, argumentation, or some combination		X	As above
e) Recite poems (four to six stanzas), sections of speeches, or dramatic soliloquies	X	X	Heritage A Midsummer Nights Dream





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<b>Standard VIII Viewing and Media</b> Use viewing skills and strategies to comprehend and interpret a variety of visual media			
	<b>1<sup>st</sup> Semester</b>	<b>2<sup>nd</sup> Semester</b>	<b>Units</b>
<b>1.</b> Use a variety of criteria to evaluate and form viewpoints of visual and print media	##		
a) Recognize the different ways media products reflect the society for which they were created		X	To Kill a Mocking Bird; DVD society
b) Analyze the different purposes and the variety of messages conveyed by visual media (e.g., main concept, details theme, view point)		X	As above
c) Can discuss the reasons for varied interpretations of visual and print media		X	Debate; internet sources
d) Critically reflect on advertisements' purposes and methods	##		
e) Reflect on how personal values/experiences compare with those spread by the media			
f) Compare and reflect on media sources (such as discrepancies of information, various points of view, and various agendas). Consider the validity and/or reliability of internet sites and other media		X	Debate
g) Discuss the use of stereotypes and biases in visual media (e.g., distorted representation and stereotyping in advertising; elements of stereotypes such as physical characteristics, mannerisms and attitudes)		X	To Kill a Mocking Bird
<b>2.</b> Analyze strategies employed by the media (e.g., band wagon appeal, appeal to pity, perpetuation of stereotypes, use of visual representations, special effects, language) to inform, persuade, entertain, and transmit culture	##		

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	1 <sup>st</sup> Semester	2 <sup>nd</sup> Semester	Units
4. Compare between visual media and written texts		X	To Kill a Mocking Bird
5. Analyzes language choice used to enhance visual and print media (e.g., language of particular genres, the use of emotional or logical arguments in commercials)	##		
6. Identify symbols, images; sound and other conventions used in visual media (e.g., set elements that identify a particular time period or culture; short cuts used to construct meaning, e.g. screech of breaks and a thud to imply a car crash; sound and image used together; the use of long camera shots to establish setting)		X	To Kill a Mocking Bird; music, light/dark, angles

##### Teachers at Gr8 would rather leave this out of the program; at present advertising and propaganda is not covered – revise benchmarks?